

10 Guezl / de Balzac
A

SURVEY *36*
OF
PRINCES

AND THEIR
FAVOURITES,

BY THE

Ingenious Monsieur de *Balzack*,

IN HIS

ARISTIPPUS

Abridg'd and Translated.

*by M^r Thomas Sheridan Brother to
the Bishop of Kilmore*

L O N D O N: Printed in the Year 1703.

SURVEY
OF
PRINCIPLES
AND THEIR
FAVOURITES
BY THE
Ingenious M. de Balthazar
ARISTIPUS
Abridged and Translated.



LONDON: Printed in the Year 1702.

A N

ABRIDGEMENT

O F

Monsieur *de Balzac's*

ARISTIPPUS, &c.

TH E Court is often Govern'd by a sort of Men, who Advise for themselves rather than Counsel their Master; they answer their own Sentiments, and not his Demands. All their Results issue from the inferior Part, *Interest* always carries it with them beyond *Honour* or *Reason*; and being sensible of no stronger Temptation in their Souls than that of *Gain*, they ground their Opinions on the same Baseness, and on the same mean Considerations, that a *Farmer* or *Receiver* would do, were he seated in the same place.

Let the Ship which carries them Perish, if it will, and let the *Publick* run the Hazard; they easily Comfort themselves for the *Shipwreck* of the *State*, so there be but a *Skiff*, in which they may gain the Shore, and secure their own Families. Nevertheless, it cannot be absolutely said, That these Men have ill Designs against the *State*, or that they desire its Ruine; They Reserve only to themselves their first and most tender Affections,

Affections, and excepting their own *Interest*, I beleieve their *Master's* would be very Dear unto them. But the Mischief is, that they are never absent from their *Interest*, no more than from themselves, and this always renders them so *Irresolute*, that they have not *Courage* enough to utter a *Bold Truth*, if it be never so little *Dangerous* to the Establishment of their *Fortune*, altho' most Important for their *Master's* Service.

A most wretched and miserable *Prudence*! They consider not that a *Spy*, who gives Intelligence, is not more Mischievous, than a *Centinel* that says nothing; And that they are as well the cause of the *Prince's* Loss by their *Silence*, as others by their *Treachery*. They consider not, that by leaving him to that Danger, whence they could withdraw him, they do no less contribute to his *Ruine*, than those who *Drive* and *Precipitate* him into it. They perceive not, that *Disloyalty* doth no hurt, which *Weakness* is not as capable to perform.

What they do therefore, is not to *Reign*, is not to *Conquer*, is not to *Triumph*; 'Tis only to *Live*; and that also after a strange Manner. 'Tis to spend the Time from *Morning* till the *Afternoon*, and so *Drill* on till the next *Day*. Their Government is neither *Peace* nor *War*, nor a *Truce*; 'Tis a *Rest* of *Idleness*, 'tis a *Dead Sleep*, which by *Artifice* they procure for the *People*, and which is neither *Good* nor *Natural*.

They know not how to *Cure*, but only how to *Paint* the *Sick*, and makethem *Look* well. They would reclaim *Rebellion* by *Careses*, and they Glut it with *Benefits* and *Gratifications*; but thereby they render it more *Powerful*, and not one jot the better; They encrease its *Force*, but not diminish its *Malice*. They sometimes take from it some Men which are to be Sold; and such Advantages as signify nothing; And they do not consider, That it is to Cultivate *Disorder* thus slightly to *Touch* its *Branches* and its *Buds*, and not to put the *Iron* to the *Body* and to the *Root*.

Thus they oblige the *Prince* to descend from his *Throne*, to Treat with his *Subjects*; Of a *Sovereign* they make a private *Man*, and of a *Legislator* an *Advocate*. By this *Breach* they throw down the *Partition-Wall*, which separates *Him* from the *People*, and change *Power* into *Equality*. The *Guilty* ascend the *Tribunal*, and Deliberate concerning their own Fact with the *Judge*; They name the *Place* of the *Conferree*, and it is *Accepted*;

cepted; They choose for this Parley such Persons as They most confide in, and they are *Granted* them; and there they speak not a word either of *Grace* or of *Pardon*, for such Terms would seem too *Rough*, and would sound too *Harsh* in their Ears: But the Offended *Master* solemnly Declares, That all was done for the good of his *Service*, and thinks himself Beholding to those unfaithful *Servants* for the *Injuries* they have done him.

In fine, the Design of these Men being only to Dismiss the *Multitude*, and to divide the *Allies* at any rate, they *Grant* them more than they *Demand*, they are Prodigal of the *Publick Faith*, they Husband not the *King's Name*; And after this manner they bring him to the brink of two *Extremities* equally Dangerous: For whether it be, that he will keep his *Word* to the Ruine of his *Affairs*, or Establish his *Affairs* by the Violation of his *Word*, he is still reduc'd to a most Deplorable *Choice*, either to hazard his *State* by being *Faithful*, or to Forfeit his *Honour* that he may continue *King*.

Such *Ministers* have caus'd the end of two *Empires*, have lost *Rome* and *Constantinople* by the fatal faintness of their *Counsels*; They open'd the Door to all the *Barbarians*, they shamefully Purchas'd *Peace* from the *Goths*, the *Vandals*, and other *Northern Nations*; They made no Account of the *Disshonour* of the *Empire* and of the Infamy of the *Roman Name*, provided they might by the *Sweetness* of the *Word* Correct the *Bitterness* of the *Thing*; as when they paid *Tribute* to their *Enemies*, they might be permitted to say, they gave a *Pension* to their *Allies*.

Yet let us not *Agravate* their *Guilt*, but rather *Pardon* them in some measure, and not Accuse them of *Treason*. I believe they would not sell and deliver up their *Master*, but they are not Angry that the World should know they Can do it. On some Occasions they make no Difficulty of setting a *Price* upon him, they suffer him to be *Traffick'd* for; They afford the *Merchants* even some *Patterns*, altho' they will part with the whole *Piece*. 'Tis a *Maxim* of theirs, That one may sometimes Deceive the *Prince* for his own Good; But the Mischief is, That they do it too often, and all for their own Ends.

'Tis true, the *Subtilty* of the *Understanding*, the *Solidity* of *Judgment*, a courageous *Prudence*, and a considerate *Boldness*, are not *voluntary* Things; They depend no more on our *Election*, than a *Healthy Constitution* or a fair *Proportion*. We are Responsible for our own *Faults*, and not for those of A-

There is no Man bound to be of Great Parts, yet there is none but is oblig'd to be Good: And if we cannot for the Glory of the *Publick*, furnish our selves with *Courage* and with *Wisdom*, we ought at least to contribute our *Innocence* for the Repose of *Common Society*.

What shall we say then of these insolent Sons of *Fortune*, who with displaid Colours Combat the Authority of the *Laws* and of *Justice*, who in the Government of a *State* produce a form'd Design for its Ruine; who grow *Fat* with the Juice and Substance of exhausted *Provinces*; who Build up their own *House* with the Wrack and Dissipation of a whole *Kingdom*?

What shall we say of those insufferable *Varlets*, who Revenge their least Quarels with the Hands and Arms of their *Master*; who Declare all those Guilty of *High Treason*, that do not fall prostrate before them; who by a Bloody and Cruel *Peace*, all Black with Mournings and Funerals, bring the People into *Despair*, and reduce the *Honestest* Sort of Men to be unable to save themselves but in a *Revolt*?

In fine, What shall we say of those base *Courtiers*, who *Triumph* and yet were never *Victorious*; who Enjoy in *Idleness* the *Sweats* and *Pains* of Great *Captains*; who at a *Comedy* or a *Ball*, or perhaps at a *Tennis-Court*; expect the News of gaining of *Battles*, and of taking of *Towns*, whereof the *General* must give them an Account, and of which they reckon to reap most of the *Advantage*.

Observe them in an Antient and Modern *History*, you will find how all to them is *Prey*, how all is *Plunder*, how they feed on all *Dead Bodies*, (as the Saying was amongst the *Romans*) and leave nothing but *Loss* and *Affliction* to desolate *Families*, to *Orphans* and *Widdows*. Let us once again consult the long Experience of this old World, an Experience which embraceth so many *Ages* and so many *Countries*. Let us from thence enquire more particularly concerning those who have Govern'd the World in spite of it, and who have *Reign'd* without a *Crown*, without *Right*, and without *Merit*.

Such People commonly introduce themselves into *Court* by low Means, by *Gringing* and by *Flattery*, the basest of all *Vices*, and to *Princes* the most *Pernicious*. All their Design being to make *pleasing* Propositions, they enquire not whether they *Profit* or *Harm*; so as they *Please*, it sufficeth. And to Establish the strict Commerce which they Meditate with the *Prince*, they

they insinuate themselves into his Mind by the intelligence they endeavour to keep with his *Passions*; and having once got Possession of his *Mind*, they seize on all the *Avenues*, and leave not so much as Entrance for his *Confessor*. How weak and tender soever his Inclinations may be to *Evil*, they Water it and Dress it with so much care, that presently there Springs up a great *Tree* from a little *Seed*, and a violent opinated *Habit* from a light *Disposition*.

At first, they content themselves to Breathe in his Ears, that it is not necessary for a *Prince* to be so much an *honest* Man, that it is sufficient he is not *wicked*; that he wou'd put himself to too much trouble to make himself *belov'd*, that he ought only to hinder his being *bated*; That solid and perpetual *probity* is too *heavy* and too *difficult*, but that its *Image*, which changeth not, hath the same splendor as the *Original*, and produceth the same Effect: That from time to time a vertuous Action, which may be of no great cost, being fitly perform'd, may serve to maintain his Reputation. Thence they go further, and leave him not in so fair a way; After having made him esteem *Good* an indifferent thing, they make him approve *Evil* reasonable, they afford *Vice* the Colour of *Vertue*.

Now since in the whole World there is no good of so great use, and which so universally Communicates it self as a good *Prince*, nor any *Evil* which disperseth it self more, and proves more pernicious than an *ill one*; 'tis plain that in all the extent of human Justice, there are no Punishments great enough for those Persons who change this *Good* into *Evil*, and who corrupt so salutiferous and excellent a thing. They had far better have poisoned all the *Wells*, and all the *Fountains* of their Country; shou'd they infect the very *Rivers*, Water might be gotten from elsewhere, Heaven it self wou'd still furnish us with some Drops. But here of necessity we must drink, whether it be *Water* or *Poison*; and against those *Domestick* Evils we are not permitted to use Foreign Remedies; we are oblig'd to continue miserable by the Laws of our *Religion*, and to obey *Furies* and *Madmen*, not only for *Fear*, but also for *Conscience*-sake.

For which Cause, since the Persons of *Princes*, whatever they be, ought to be Inviolable and Sacred, and that the Characters of God's Finger make an Impression, which we ought to Reverence on what Matter soever it be Engraven: Let us turn
all

all our hatred against those *Flatterers*, which cast us into such Miseries without Redemption: Let us lay it on those *Evil Councillors*, who give us ill *Princes*, who provoke *Innocents* to Murder, and *Murderers* to burn *Temples*.

Or if they meet with Natures, which are susceptible of such violent Passions, and which are in an equal Degree distant from *Vice* and from *Vertue*; if they light on soft easy *Princes*, who are without Edge or Sting, and having no inclination to *Evil*, but are either so fond of their *Ease*, or so diffident of their own *Abilities*, that they throw all the weight of their Affairs upon their *Favorites*, 'tis still so much the worse for the *Subjects*; for these *Upstarts* abusing the simplicity of their pliant *Master*; and taking the advantage which their Spirits hath over his, do Reign themselves openly and without controul; and esteeming it but as the Right and Title of their unjust Dominion; to the weight of *Tyranny* they add the shame which accrues from suffering it from a *particular Person*.

It cannot be imagin'd what Wiles and Artifices they use to attain hereunto, and totally to Subject the *Prince* to themselves: First, the Method is, to spur him up with *Glory* in the Establishment of *their* Fortune; they give him to understand through several *Speaking Trumpets*, that his *Predecessors*, who were nothing more Powerful than he, made some far greater *Creatures* of theirs. That its much better to raise up *new* People, who have no *Dependence*, and who shall only hold from his *Majesty*, than to use Persons of *good Birth* and known *Probity*, whose Affections and Party are already made. That it concerns his *Honour* not to leave his Works *Imperfect*, but to labour for their *Embellishment* after having establish'd their *Solidity*. That he ought to put them in a condition that they may not be Ruin'd but by *Himself*: And in fine, that he cannot abandon a *Person* that has been so dear to him, without condemning the Conduct of *many Tears*, and render a publick Testimony, either of his past *Blindness*, or present *Fickleness*.

'Tis certain, that having begun to love a thing for the love of it self, time presently adds our own *Interest* to the merit of the thing: The desire we have the World shou'd believe that all our Elections are good, makes that Action become *Necessary*, which at first was *voluntary*; insomuch that what has been done against *Reason*, being not to be justified but by *Constancy*, we never think we have done enough; and upon this belief which

we have, tho' we were resolv'd to discontinue our *Affection*, yet it seems we are oblig'd to defend our *Judgment*.

Now if these considerations can shake stable Minds, and sometimes make wise men fail, we need not be astonish'd, if they easily overthrow a *weak Prince*, who makes use only of *borrow'd Reason*, and who will yield himself to be perswaded by a very mean Eloquence, provided it favours his *Inclination*.

And now he is engag'd in the making of this *Subject* whom he loves, *Great*; he speaks of him no more, but as of his chief *Enterprize* and his noblest *Aim*; he is without minding it, become an *Idolater*, he adores what himself has made, and is like the *Statuaries* of *Athens*, who of their own Works made their Gods. His Thoughts which shou'd be employ'd for *Glory*, and have no other Object but the *Safety* of his *People*, are all at an end in this gallant Design: He opens him his *Coffers*, and pours out *Treasures* upon him, as well to spite others, as to benefit him. He has already conferr'd on him all the considerable *Offices* of his Kingdom, and all the Ornaments of his *Crown*: He hath nothing left to give him but his own Person, which at last he does with so absolute and entire a *Resignation*, that in the very *Monasteries* there is not an *Example* of a Will more subjected, and more perfectly Renouncing it self.

Thus is the poor *Prince* at the Mercy and Discretion of his *Favorite*, and besides is so far engag'd that there is hardly any way for him to release himself; for the *Courtier* has made all the *World* either his *Enemy*, or suspected that he might have none but *himself* to trust to; and by having long had the Possession of *Affairs*, which he communicates with no Man, he alone being privy to all, becomes at last a *necessary Evil*, which the *Prince* cannot be easily cur'd of.

After this manner, without strikeing a stroke, or having ventur'd further than from the *Palace* to the *Street*, the *Prince* sees himself miserably fallen into another Man's Power, which is after the loss of a *Battle*, the worst thing that cou'd happen to him. The unhappy Moment, which first engag'd him to commence his *Affection*, and to believe more than he ought, has reduc'd him to this deplorable Extremity. And indeed there is no *Captivity* so Miserable, so Base, nor so Infamous, as that of a *Prince*, who suffers himself to be taken in his *Cabinet*, and by one of his own *Creatures*. He cou'd not

have exercis'd a more Cowardly Patience; nor is it possible for him to be more shamefully Unhappy.

I shall go yet farther, when a King Eats his People to the very Bones, and lives in his own Dominion as in an Enemy's Country, he does not so far Estrange himself from the Duty of his Place, as when he Obeys another. Tyranny differs very much from Royalty, yet still it resembles it a great deal more than Servitude; 'tis at least some kind of Government, and one way of Commanding Men, tho' not the most perfect. But for a Sovereign to give himself as a Prey to three or four petty Fellows, and not reserve so much as the Disposition of his own Will, to follow his own Inclinations, nor the Use of his own Judgment in the Knowledge of his Affairs; In such a Case, I know not what Name to give him, and there cannot be a more miserable Interregnum than his Life, during which he does nothing, and yet does all those Evils which happen to his People.

What a brave thing it was in former times, to see a King of Castille, who durst not walk abroad, nor put on a Sute of Cloaths without the permission of Alvaro de Luna? All Favours which others Demanded of him, he was oblig'd to Obtain from his Favourite; the most he could do was to Recommend his Servants to him, and to do good Offices with him, for those he had a Kindness for. What a Gallant Thing it was to see such a Courtier as he who Revok'd the Elections of his Prince, Restor'd again those Employments, which his Master had already given away; and took it as a great Affront that his Sovereign should once in his Life read a Paper which he Presented him to Sign, complaining that it was to Suspect his Fidelity, and Forget his past Services.

How many Mischiefs do you think must follow such a one? How many Violences are committed under the shadow of this insolent Courtier, who has not a Groom that believes it not to be his Right to Treat Gentlemen with Contempt, and by Alledging only his Master's Name to commit Outrages with Impunity? Are there any People about him, who do not Prey upon the Subject, who do not make Sale of an Audience of his, and who are not Cock-sure of Enriching themselves with the Refuse of his Avarice, and with the Superfluities of his House.

All

All this while the *Prince* commits no *Sin*, and yet he forbears not to be *Guilty*. His *Ignorance* is *Unpardonable*, his *Pacience* is no *Vertue*, and all the *Disorders* which either he knows not of, or which he suffers, are imputed to him before *God* even as if himself had Committed them. With a great deal of *Reason* therefore, that *Prince* who was according to *God's* own Heart, desires him in express Terms, and that in the Fervency of his most Ardent Prayers, That *He* would cleanse him from secret Faults, and acquit him of the Sins of others. Now does not this last Word plainly imply, That *Kings* ought not to content themselves with a personal and particular Innocence, and that it matters not for them to be just as to their own Actions, if they lose themselves by the Injustice of their *Ministers*.

And here I cannot omit an extraordinary Rapture express'd to this purpose by a Religious Man of *Italy*, in a Sermon he Preach'd before a Prince of that Country, wherein having learnedly Discours'd of the Duties of *Sovereigns*, he all of a sudden breaks forth in these Words: "Last Night, Sir, I had a strange Vision; Methought the Earth open'd before me, and I distinctly look'd into the Centre thereof. I consider'd the Torments of the other Life, and all that terrible Train of *God's* Justice; since which my Imagination is scarce well Reassum'd. Amongst the Wicked of the past Ages, I knew a great many of this: *Detractors*, *Murderers*, *impious Persons*, and *Hypocrites* ran thither in great Troops. and crowded at the brim of this Gulf; But having observ'd in their *Lives* the visible Marks of their *Reprobation*, I thought it not strange to see them Arrive whereto I had seen them March. What Astonish'd me extremely above all, was, that I perceiv'd your *Highness* there in this unhappy Throng, which was at the Brink of Destruction; And even as I was thus Surpris'd and Affrighted by the Novelty of so unexpected an Encounter, I cry'd out to your *Highness*, Is it possible that a Man should Damn himself by Praying to *God*, and that you should go to *Hell*? You, Sir, who are the Best and most Religious Prince in the World? Whereunto your *Highness* answer'd me with a Sigh, I do not go, Father. but I am led thither.

The Fertility of this Subject is so Great, that it would furnish us with a Weeks Discourse ; but we must end with this, and conclude, That the Distance is so vast between the *Sovereign* and *private* Persons, that they may be rais'd very high, and yet be still very far below him. 'Tis good that he who is *nearest* the *Prince* should be extremely *distant* from him. 'Tis fit there should be many Things which the best Beloved may not Reach.

I confess after all, *Justice* may admit of *Favour* ; For *Reason* destroys not *Humanity*, neither does it oppose its self against honest *Affections*, nor *Condemns Familiarity* and *Confidence*. *Philosophy* and *Christianity* agree in all these with *Nature* ; and the *Son of God* when he made himself *Man*, has by his Example Authoriz'd all this. Let there be a *Favourite* therefore at Court, let there be a Man who is the *Prince's* *Confident*. But let there be none who Day and Night *Besiegeth* the *King* ; who by a violent *Usurpation Appropriates* him wholly to himself. He that will have to himself alone, a Good which ought to belong to all, exerciseth the same *Injustice* as if he hid the *Sun* from the whole *World*.

In short, let there be none about the *Prince*, that will presume to make a perfect *VVard* of him, or a meer *Tool*, to carry on his own Designs ; For, what would be in Effect but to be at one and the same time at the *highest Rise* of human Things, and at the *lowest Stage* amongst Men ; to be call'd *His Majesty* and *His Highness*, and to be possess'd of nothing but what is little and low ; to need a *Tutor* on the *Throne*, and a *Pedagogue* in *Council*.

O God, send this Evil to those of *Asia*.

But we must speak more like *Christians*, and more charitably. Let us Conclude with a Prayer that Comprehends *Asia* with *Europe*, and Embrace the general Good of the whole World :

Lord, turn away from all States, an Evil which is the Cause of so many other Evils ; Deny not to *Sovereigns* the Spirit of Command and Conduct ; but give them Understanding enough to Counsel themselves well, or to choose their Counsellors as they ought.

4 FE 62

FINIS

